and the type of direction that we need to move. So, on the whole, I would like to say, Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, that the agenda for the three strategic Departments is fairly ambitious as what we need to do in the next 10 to 15 years or even 20 years. The necessary financial support should be forthcoming. I am happy to note that we continue to get the type of support that the scientists are looking forward, but there has to be a level of ambition which is far above what is currently seen in the context of planning and visualising the future of these departments. It is here that I think, the political system, the scientific community and the whole lot of user-base that use this kind of a system have to come together and look for a direction for the 21st century. I think, the present develoments assure us that this is possible. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House is adjourned to meet at 2.30 p.m.

The House then adjourned for lunch at forty-five minutes past one of the clock.

The House re-assembled after lunch at thirty minutes past two of the clock,
MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (RAILWAYS), 2007-08

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Sir, I lay on the Table a statement (in English and Hindi) showing Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) for the year 2007-2008.

MOTION OF THANKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS—*Contd.*

PROF. M.S. SWAMINATHAN (Nominated): Sir, I thank you for the opportunity. What to speak of the President's Address? It gives an inspiring account of the various steps taken to promote socially inclusive economic growth. I think, all the steps, if they are successful, they are quite a landmark in the developmental history. I, however, wish, there has also been a reference to the National Policy for Farmers presented by the Minister for Agriculture, Shri Sharad Pawarji, last November, in this House. I do not think the significance of that particular policy statement is widely understood because neither in the colonial times nor in Independent India has there been a policy for farmers. There have been many policies for *krishi* but nothing for *Kisans*. This is the first time we have a policy, in the whole history of many centuries, a policy of kisans. Now, that also makes two very important commitments. One is to change the direction of our agricultural strategy to one of promoting the net income of the farmers, not measure agricultural progress only in terms of million tonnes of wheat or rice, but what has happened to the farmers.

To give an idea, one of the reports says that even in a State like Punjab, a farmer, having 3.79 hectares growing wheat or rice today is able to earn an income which is less than the starting salary of a Class-IV servant of the Government of India. I am sure, this disparity is going to increase after the Sixth Pay Commission gives its report. Therefore, I would very much like to see that this commitment in the national policy to income orientation to the farmers-the Government has started this process--is taken.

The other very improtant part of that particular policy is how to attract and retain the youth in farming. Today, when elders want to leave farming, it is very difficult to get young people, including those who have taken their agricultural graduate degrees, and so on, from agricultural universities, taking up farming. The policy contains some prescription for doing